The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and official interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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LABOR'S GOAL!
To Repeal
Taft-Hartley Law

LABOR AND HOUSING

By RICHARD GRAY

President, AFL Building and Construction Trades Department

The following is the second part of a series of excerpts taken from testimony presented before the Joint Committee on Housing by Richard Gray, president of the AFL's Building and Construction Trades Department.

Mr. Gray's testimony ably refuted the baseless charges frequently made to the effect that the building trades unions have been responsible for the delays and high costs involved in home building. The presentation of labor's side of the story on the construction industry will be of interest to all readers of the labor press.

PRODUCTIVITY

The volume of housing construction in 1947 indicates that a new record has been achieved. The number of units started in 1947 estimated at 860,000 new permanent units was exceeded only once—1925, seven years after the end of World War I. This record was achieved in spite of several other activity registered in 1946.

Of even greater importance is the number of dwelling units completed. Last year 745,000 dwelling units were completed, while during 1946 only 427,000 were made ready for occupancy. In other words, 70 percent more units were made ready for families in need of housing during 11 months of 1947 than in all of the previous year.

In considering this record of performance it is natural to raise the question about the charges made, repeatedly, persistently and often maliciously, that one of the most serious obstacles to the increase in the housing volume is the record of low productivity. It is widely claimed that the output of work on has been greatly reduced, that workers are soldiering on the job, that they refuse to turn out a record of output anywhere near the established standard of their trade.

A searching review of all available information reveals that productivity in the construction of homes, after having suffered a severe decline, has staged a spectacular comeback in the past 12 months.

Normally the construction of an average, one-family house requires approximately four months from start to completion. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the first half of 1946 the time required to complete a one-family house averaged from 6 to as much as 9 months. As the above points out, "The causes for the delays during 1946 were not hard to find. Both materials and labor were in short supply in many of the important housing construction centers. The supply of materials was not yet brought their production up to capacity and the labor supply had not become adjusted to peacetime requirements."

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics findings, the construction time period has been steadily declining since the middle of 1946, reflecting improved productivity. The report also indicates that beginning in April, 1947, there has been an especially notable improvement in the time it took to complete an average single-family house. The evidence gathered by the bureau during this period indicates "that the dwelling units started since June of 1947 will be completed in about 4½ months on the average." This 4½ months time reduction in the construction time period indicates improvements in efficiency of both labor and management."

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES

In the course of the last two years a deliberate campaign of propaganda has been conducted in an attempt to discredit unions in the building and construction industry, and to persuade the public that labor is the chief reason for the high cost of housing or the housing shortage itself. These charges have appeared in newspaper articles, in special columns, in magazines and in every other available medium. They have covered a wide range of allegations extending from a blanket and unsubstantiated indictment of organized labor as being the source of what is termed in such charges as "featherbedding," to instances allegedly occurring in particular communities as the result of policies pursued by specific trades.

At least 99 percent of the stories so presented have proved to be without any foundation whatsoever. Those who have perpetrated them must stand convicted of bad faith and of malicious intent in falsifying facts and misleading the public.

To give a few typical illustrations of the types of charges made, I will cite two or three instances of such charges along with our answers to them.

Refusal To Use the Spray Gun In Painting Homes

The charge has been made that in many cities union painters either refuse, or are forbidden by union rules, to use the spray gun on home building. It is made as a flat assertion with the idea of creating the impression that a modern technological improvement is being held back by unions intent on perpetuating the slower, less efficient and more costly methods which would yield greater earnings to them.

It is significant therefore that these stories have failed to raise such pertinent questions as: How efficient and economical is the spray gun in the painting of a home? How safe is the spray gun for the painter? What safeguards should be maintained when it is in use? Nor do these stories indicate that their authors have gone to the source of information and interviewed the painters themselves to verify charge with these tactics.

All of these stories appearing in 1947 failed to mention the fact that the International Brotherhood of Painters, which includes in its membership the spray gun, launched in the early part of 1944 a comprehensive survey of the use of the spray painting machine and its effects. In September, 1946, a detailed report to its convention on the basis of which a specific program on the use of the spray gun was laid down by the International Brotherhood. The fact is that the 1946 convention of the International Brotherhood of Painters adopted a national program of collective bargaining on the use of spray painting machine throughout the United States and Canada and recommended that these uniform standards be established by collective bargaining negotiation with the National Painting and Decorating Contractors Association and other employers organized.

The program adopted by the International Brotherhood of Painters is a positive one. It is designed to insure the use of all necessary safety measures to protect the workers and, where applicable, to increase the speed of work to the widest possible acceptance by workmen of the spray gun on all types of construction. The national standards which the Brotherhood is attempting to evolve would apply in the form of a model state code and a model city ordinance which would require that all spray painting be done under union operations, would call for shorter working hours for spray machine operators, with periods of intermission, and would call for periodic physical examinations of the operators to determine the effect on their health.

The point that stands out emphatically in connection is that the union concerned is making a real contribution toward better and more rational utilization of a modern technological development in the same time to safeguard the safety and health of workers against hazard; and that it is certainly not standing in the way of reduced home building costs.

Average Weekly Factory Pay Hits $52.51; Longer Workweek Chief Cause for Boost

Washington, D. C.—The nearly 13,000,000 factory workers in the nation received average weekly earnings of $52.51 as of mid-December, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported on the basis of preliminary estimates.

This gain was reduced to small proportions, however, by continuing rising prices, the BLS statement declared.

The $1 increase scored over the November record was due principally to the lengthening of the workweek, which became of the year-end acceleration in industrial activity now in an average of 41.1 hours, the highest level recorded for the year 1947.

This longer workweek was the chief reason for an advance in average hourly earnings to $1.277 as additional overtime payments forced the hourly earnings figure above the November average.

The rise in average weekly hours for the durable goods industries from 40.8 to 41.5 brought weekly earnings to $56.17. A similar increase in hours over the level at the end of 1946 has largely resulted from subsequent improvements in material flows and continued high demand. Significant gains in most major industries. Scheduled weekly hours are well above the actual hours currently worked, since the latter reflects the effects of turnover, absenteeism, part-time employment, and work stoppages for a variety of causes.

Gains over November in hours and earnings were also reported by many nondurable goods establishments. In contrast, the workweek for the nondurable goods industries was slightly below the year-ago figure. Hours have increased substantially, however, since the seasonal decline of last spring and summer. Most of the major nondurable groups had increases in weekly hours and weekly earnings in December; particularly significant were those for the textiles, leather, apparel, and printing groups.

NOTE TO EDITORS: The above cartoon is reproduced through the courtesy of "The Chronicle," Cincinnati's labor newspaper, and is the second of a series to be published and distributed to the labor press in mat form, without charge, by the Weekly News Service.

Please advise us of your reactions to these cartoons in order that we may determine whether to order additional similar material on other issues of interest to labor. Address your communications to C. F. Miller, Editor, AFL Weekly News Service, Room 311, AFL Building, Washington 1, D. C.

AFL Urges Extension of Rent Control; Seeks Stronger Law to Curb Rent Rise

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor called for the extension of rent control until June 30, 1949, and the strengthening of the existing law to make rent control more effective and fully enforceable.

In testimony before the Senate Banking Committee, Boris Shishkin, AFL economist, emphasized the importance of the rent item in the family budget, especially among the low income groups, and warned that the expiration of control on February 29 would mean a sharp increase in living costs.

In addition to calling for the extension of controls, Shishkin recommended that no more increases or the "voluntary" type be permitted; that protection against eviction be strengthened; that a direct enforcement system be set up giving the Housing Expediter power to secure compliance with the law; that controls be continued on dwellings built for decontrol under the terms of the existing law; and that local rent boards be reconstituted to perform advisory functions only, with final power left in the hands of the Housing Expediter.

Reviewing the experience under the Housing and Rent Act of 1947, Mr. Shishkin declared:

"Figures of the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that from 1939 to June 1947 rents rose less than 4.7 percent. This indicates that since the establishment of rent ceilings in rent control areas in 1943 until the summer of 1947 and until the modification of the original rent control law, rents remained fairly stable. The Index shows, however, that from June 1947 to November 1947, in the short space of 5 months, rents rose on the average of 6½ percent, or more than they had in the preceding 5 years.

"This last sharp increase was caused by the weaknesses embodied in the rent control law amendments of 1947. Not only did this law greatly weaken the enforcement of rent control ceilings and provided for decontrol of certain types of units, but it also established so-called 'voluntary' increases in rents up to 15 percent, whereupon a lease was signed by the landlord and the tenant to run until December 1948.

"Actually, the average rents throughout the country have gone up more than is shown by the BLS index. This is due to three reasons: (1) No newly constructed rental units have been included in the index since June 1947. (2) Rents which are decontrolled by the 1947 law, were made available at rents almost 70 percent above the rents on comparable existing dwellings.

"(2) The Index does not take full account of the rent increases resulting from the turnover of the tenants. Many landlords have undertaken a family was forced to move to another unit. It has been customary for the landlords to make minor alterations in the unit in order to justify its rental to the new tenant at a higher rent.

"(3) No allowance is made in the BLS index for the Union arrangements often forced by the landlords upon the tenants requiring the tenants to buy used furniture at an outrageous price or to make unacceptable payments as a condition of moving into the apartment or dwelling unit.

NLRB Case Load Climbs; Labor Gains Union Shops

Washington, D. C.—Record business during the month of December, the greatest in its 12-year history, pushed the National Labor Relations Board farther behind in its work under the Taft-Hartley law.

According to an announcement by Robert N. Denham, general counsel for the NLRB, 2,064 cases were filed with the board during the month or 49 percent more than were filed in November.

Of these cases, 1,825 involved petitions for elections. 178 were alleged unfair labor practices by employers and 61 were charges against unions.

Despite the fact that a record number of elections were conducted by the board during December, the number of cases pending disposition at various procedural stages rose to a new high of 2,853 cases, 39 percent of which were filed prior to August 22, 1946, the effective date of the Taft-Hartley law. In terms of unfinished business, the NLRB fell far behind the cases behind for the month, a comparison of the backlog for December and that for November reveals.

The NLRB report showed that 521 of the 796 elections conducted were union shop elections required under the Taft-Hartley law. The boards report for the previous month indicated, unions continued to sweep these elections by overwhelming majorities. In December, unions secured victories in 518 of the 521 union shop elections held. Ninety percent of those eligible to vote actually participated in the elections and of this number, 93 percent voted for the union shop.

That the union shop election issue has reached great importance is attested to by the fact that of the 1,825 petitions for elections received by the NLRB, 1,245 asked for elections to determine union shop representation. American Federation of Labor affiliates asked for 966 of these elections.

Reporting on elections held to determine whether employes desired a union to bargain for them, the board said 287 such elections were held with 28,358 valid votes cast by workers. Sixty-two percent of this number favored union representation as the bargaining agent. Of these, the AFL unions took part in 170 of these elections and won at least a majority in 94 instances.

TAFT-HARTLEY LAW HELD AID TO COMMUNISTS

York, Pa.—The Taft-Hartley law actually assists the growth of Communistic infiltration into American labor unions, according to Joseph M. Jacobs, a prominent labor attorney of Chicago.

Jacobs told an AFL Pennsylvania rally that "no Communist will be deterred by an oath of allegiance to our government—that is baby stuff for them."

"But under the Taft-Hartley Law," he said, "a Communist may be fired out of a union if he pays his dues—and many Communists are taking advantage of that clause and thumbing their noses at American labor leaders who are anxious to preserve the American system of private enterprise."

Council Urges Full Bi-Partisan Support for European Aid Plan

Text Of Council's Statement On European Recovery Plan

The text of the Executive Council's declaration on the Marshall Plan follows:

"World peace has always been and continues to be the first objective of American foreign policy.

"To that end all our efforts since the close of World War II has been dedicated.

"America took the lead in organizing the United Nations as an instrument of international cooperation for world peace and security. We sought to guarantee freedom, security and the right of self-determination for every country. We gave our food, resources, wealth, equipment and ingenuity with an unstinting hand to every nation in need. We offered to surrender our practical monopoly of the most fearful military weapon in history to international control provided all other nations would similarly renounce the development of such bombs.

"Yet at every step these efforts to consolidate peace have been checkmated by Soviet Russia.

"We need not recite here the long postwar record of obstruction, aggression and broken faith set up by Russia and her satellites. That record is fresh in the minds of the American people. And we are given daily reminders in the torrent of abuse, calculated falsehood and threats that emanate from behind the iron curtain.

"Apologists for Soviet Russia in this country assert that 'misunderstandings' have developed which could develop from the fact that we speak different languages and that we have a broad sense. Russia is talking the language of war, while we are merely talking only in terms of peace.

"This is neither fair nor accurate to describe the Marshall Plan as a move for the containment of Russian expansion. Its real purpose is to contain and forestall another war which might result from hunger and desperation. Through the Marshall Plan, we hope to rebuild the economy of the free nations of Europe in a self-sustaining basis, thus permitting their people to retain their political freedom and national security. Naturally Soviet leaders who have been counting upon the pressure of unalleviated misery and hopelessness to drive all Europe into Communist captivity, object to the rescue of their prospective victims.

"From the beginning, the American Federation of Labor has wholeheartedly supported the Marshall Plan. We now reaffirm our faith in its basic wisdom and practical purposes. We are confident that with the right kind of administration the Marshall Plan will prove successful. We realize, however, that it may turn out to be a fiasco and a boomerang with the wrong kind of administration.

"Therefore the Executive Council urges Congress to provide for the appointment of an advisory council to serve in conjunction with the government agency which will administer the European recovery program. This advisory council should include adequate representation of labor as well as the key government departments. The American Federation of Labor has maintained close fraternal relationships with the free trade union movements in Europe. We know from personal contacts that these free trade union movements can be mobilized into a powerful force for constructive participation in the recovery program. That kind of cooperation is vital and essential to such an undertaking. It cannot be replaced by official representatives of the State Department operating at long range in Europe. We trust that we will be given this opportunity to be of service.

"The great majority of the American people are willing to undertake the considerable sacrifices involved in the Marshall Plan because they realize that such sacrifices are a small price to pay for the preservation of liberty and democracy.

"The chief objections to the Marshall Plan is that they come from both the Communists and from reactionaries who are still clinging to isolationism. It would be amusing thus to find the extremes in left and right reaching back together again in the same camp, if it were not bitterly disheartening. Their attitude makes it all the more important that the two major political parties eliminate partisanship from their foreign policy, which must be firm, united and unshakable in support of world peace and human freedom. We must give the world assurance that, regardless of the outcome of the 1948 elections, American foreign policy will not waver nor weaken."

Thinks Marshall Plan Most Vital Matter Before Congress

Miami.—Warning that American foreign policy must not waver or weaken in the face of Soviet Russia's hostile actions, the AFL Executive Council called upon Congress to vote for the bipartisan support of the Marshall Plan.

The Executive Council declared that America must give the world assurance that it will remain firm, united and unshakeable in defense of world peace and human freedom, regardless of the outcome of the 1948 elections.

AFL President William Green told newspapermen at a press conference that the Executive Council had given first consideration to the Marshall Plan at the current mid-winter session, because it believes the European recovery program the most important measure pending before Congress.

Mr. Green said the council in the next few days will proceed to give consideration to many other major problems, such as inflation, housing, the high cost of living, national defense and the formulation of a legislative program to bring about the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law.

The council statement emphasized the need for the fullest development of the European free trade union movement and urged that a wholehearted participation in the Marshall Plan be had. The council proposed that an advisory council composed of labor and industry representatives be appointed to consult with the state agency which will administer the plan. The declaration follows:

"The American Federation of Labor has maintained close fraternal relationships with the free trade union movements in Europe. We know from personal contact that these free trade union movements can be mobilized into a powerful force for constructive participation in the recovery program. That kind of cooperation is vital and essential to such an undertaking. It cannot be replaced by official representatives of the State Department operating at long range in Europe. We trust that we will be given this opportunity to be of service.

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ILGWU to Oust Officers Refusing To File Non-Communist Affidavits

Miami.—The general executive board of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union adopted a policy leading toward the ouster of union officials who refuse to sign the non-Communist affidavits required by the Taft-Hartley National Labor Relations Board.

Louis Stulberg, union president, said the resolution was aimed specifically at the following officers of the joint boards representing 8,000 workers who have been in Los Angeles.

He said the five were the only ones among 1,100 ILGWU officers in joint boards and local organizations in the country who had refused to comply with the affidavit requirements of the Taft-Hartley law.

"Although we remain unalterably opposed to the Taft-Hartley law and its concentration of political activities on its repeal, we believe it is the obligation of the union to follow the policy of the union, which is to make the services of the NLRB available to all our affiliates through the filing of affidavits," Stulberg declared.

In its resolution the general executive board held that those who refused to file were "acting in detriment to the best interests of the union. Mr. Dubinsky said failure to comply would "leave the union defenseless" against the Los Angeles officers.

The board also adopted a resolution calling for establishment of a "defense fund" totaling $50,000 "to raise through voluntary contributions a fund of $50,000 members."

"We can and we must halt the march of Communist influence in labor," the resolution said.

Restoration of price controls and a rollback of prices were advocated by the board as a method of halting inflation. The board also favored consideration of a plan to allocate materials and transportation facilities.

It ran an analysis of economic conditions in its own industry the garments and urged an immediate congressional investigation into the price of fabrics.

AFL's Retail Clerks Sweep Union Shop Elections In Hundreds of Food Stores

Lafayette, Ind.—The AFL's Retail Clerks International Association scored more evidence to prove the Taft-Hartley law's prediction that union shop elections be held in just a waste of time and money when it announced James A. Sufferidge, secretary-treasurer of the union, that it had won, in 11 election contests involving thousands of employes in hundreds of food stores, the union received a tremendous vote of confidence in each instance.

Out of some 6,700 acceptable ballots cast, more than 90 percent of the AFL affiliated food for their union shop as job insurance. These elections have been held among sales employes of the Kroger Company in Chicago and surrounding suburbs; Cincinnati and St. Louis; in Kroger Company stores in Chicago and suburban areas; St. Louis; Kansas City, Ind., Valparaiso, Ind., Lafayette, Ind., Canton, Ohio, and Cleveland, O.; National Tea Company clerks have voted in the Chicago area and in Indianapolis (Standard Stores).

In Los Angeles and Alameda, the International Association expects that a decision will be reached on union shop and if security elections are held in Safeway stores in retail industry.

AFL'S OFFICE WORKERS WIN UNION SHOP VOTE

New York City.—The AFL's Office Employes International Union won another union shop election in the Wall Street financial district here.

In an election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board, employes of the New York Cotton Exchange voted 74 to 6 in favor of the union shop.

This represents the second resounding triumph for local 205 of the Office Employes Union, formerly known as the United Financial Employes prior to its affiliation with the AFL international union. Recently, the union won a similar union shop election held among employes of the New York Stock Exchange.

Seaway Project Opposed by Woll

Washington, D. C.—Matthew Woll, member of the AFL Executive Council, declared the proposed St. Lawrence seaway project a "steal" to jobs of American workers.

In a statement issued in the "Congressional Record" by Senator Bridges of New Hampshire, Mr. Woll asserted the project would benefit Canada at the expense of American laborers.

The seaway plan, scheduled for Senate consideration in the month, calls for construction of a 27-foot channel from the Great Lakes to Lake Ontario, together with hydroelectric power plants along rapids of the St. Lawrence river. Canada would pay 54 per cent, or less than half the amount contributed by the United States.

Woll declared the project would build up Montreal as a shipping point at the expense of American ports. He said, that 40,000 jobs of workers in United States Transportation-Trade industry would be threatened by seaway competition.

EMPLOYER WARNS AGAINST RELIANCE UPON T-H LAW

Washington, D. C.—Clarence Francis, chairman of the board of the General Foods Corporation, warned his fellow industrialists not to rely upon Taft-Hartley law as a shield in industrial peace.

Francis, who joined other prominent business leaders who have a sufficiently liberal viewpoint as a rule that harmonious labor, management relations can be legislated, in a recent address inserted in the Congressional Record he declared:

"You can legislate conditions under which management and labor can quarrel. You can legislate conditions under which they can maintain an armed truce. But you cannot legislate harmony into the hearts of men.

"To attain positive industrial peace, we need something more than by-laws and compulsory rules. We need productive teamwork."

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

SUPPLEMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 1948

WILLIAM GREEN, President. GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

LABOR'S GOAL! To Repeal Taft-Hartley Law

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LABOR AND HOUSING

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RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES—(Continued)

Limitation on Bricklayer's Production Per Day

Let me say emphatically that there has not been and cannot be a union limiting the performance of bricklayers on a job. The Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union, while unable to answer vague and general rumors of this character has given a thorough on-the-spot investigation to every specific instance where such or similar allegation was brought to its attention.

The number of brick a competent worker can lay in a day depends, of course, on many factors, including the degree of his skill, his physical condition, the supply of materials and, above all, the type and the thickness of the wall and the number of turns, openings and corners. The results of investigations of the "600-brick-a-day" charges illustrate the real nature of the problem. Some years ago the typical house wall was of solid brick construction, 12 to 22 inches thick. Today brick veneer construction has become much more prevalent than in former years. In this type of construction, the outside or curtain wall of brick must be backed with cement block or clinker block, which is built at the same time. The backing is counted in the number of brick the mason has laid. The work on this new type of brick veneer construction is in sharp contrast with the daily output on a solid brick wall, to which the number of brick laid may easily be more than twice as great in a day. Any responsible manufacturer will testify that even 400 brick a day on brick veneer construction on a typical single-family house is a good record of bricklayers performance.

But even if the construction of modern house of solid brick construction, it must be realized that the changes in design which now call for more and wider and usually larger typical dwellings have imposed heavier and more exacting work requirements upon him. The reducing the number of brick he can lay per hour or per day.

What I do challenge is the assertion that the union has been the instrumentality for slowing down production, with the resulting increase in construction cost. The standards of skill and performance of its members is the most valuable asset that the union possesses. To maintain and preserve a high standard of achievement is one of the cardinal principles of the union. Assertions that there is any degree of self-interest in the union's undermining the standards of its own trade fly in the face of both reality and common sense.

Total Industrial Production Declines; Durable Goods Output Continues Up

Washington, D. C.—Industrial production failed to maintain the post-war record level attained in November and declined slightly during December, the Federal Reserve Board reported.

In another section of its report, the board said that department store sales for the last 3 months of 1947 were 5 percent greater than for the corresponding period in 1946, but that for the first half of January store sales "showed somewhat more than the usual seasonal decline."

Output of the nation's factories and mines was listed on its production index at 19 percent above the 1935-39 average in December against 92 percent in November and 91% in October.

Despite the general decline, activity in durable goods industries continued to advance in December to a new post-war peak. The board said these factories played an important part:

1. Steel production reached the highest rate of the year in December and continued to increase in the first half of January.

2. Assembly of passenger cars increased sharply and output of parts production for the year was about 7,500,000 in 1946 and 3,800,000 in 1941. Output of trucks in 1947 was the highest on record.

3. Production of freight cars in December reached 9,800 units "which virtually cleared the backlog of orders in the industry last spring."

4. Increases in durable goods were offset, the board said, by a "slight decline in the output of soft goods which largely because holiday influences production in a few lines such as cotton textiles and paperboard."

Green Endorses American Overseas Aid Fund Drive to Help Children of World

Washington, D. C.—The forthcoming campaign of the American Overseas Aid-United Nations Appeal for Children received the unqualified indorsement of William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor.

In a letter to Mr. Lee Marshall, national chairman of the campaign, Mr. Green expressed his gratification over the decision of the various national voluntary relief organizations to combine their efforts jointly with the United Nations Appeal for Children for the purpose of "bringing some relief to those left destitute by war, particularly children." He continued:

"The Labor League for Human Rights, the official relief arm of the American Federation of Labor, is proud to be a member of the American Overseas Aid-United Nations Appeal for Children. I am confident that the appeal of this organization will meet with a ready and generous response from the 8,000,000 members of the American Federation of Labor and their families.

"As president of the American Federation of Labor I endorse the campaign of the American Overseas Aid-United Nations Appeal for Children and call upon the membership of the American Federation of Labor to give generously."

The AFL's Labor League for Human Rights is one of the 25 American organizations, rather than conducting separate fund drives of their own, are participating in this joint drive by enterprise to raise $60,000,000 to help feed, clothe and shelter the needy and young victims of war throughout the world. Contributions will be shared in the funds raised on the basis of individual relief needs of the countries chosen for that purpose.

AFL PRINTERS WIN PAY BOOST WITHOUT CONTRACT

Seattle—AFL union printers here won a $13.25 weekly pay increase which raises to $90 the top scale for day work and to $95 for night labor during a 35-hour week.

Charles T. Hickey, president of the local 171 affiliate, said 210 workers on 2 Seattle newspapers would benefit from the wage boost which is retroactive to January 12. He announced that no contract would be signed under terms of the new agreement.

OFFICE EMPLOYES WIN THIRD UNION SHOP VOTE

New York—Local 205 of the United Financial Workers, AFL, won a union shop election among employes of the New York Curb Exchange by a vote of 178 to 12, the National Labor Relations Board announced.

The 178 constitute a majority of the 235 workers eligible to vote and gives the union the right to bargain for a union shop provision.

John Cole, local vice president, said that the union, which won similar elections in the Stock Exchange and Cotton Exchange, would soon begin negotiations with the exchanges for new contracts.

WISCONSIN REPORTS BIG DROP IN JOBLESS PAY

Madison, Wis.—Benefit payments to unemployed civilians and veterans declined sharply during the year 1947, according to the Wisconsin state industrial commission.

Most of the decrease was in federal allowances to jobless veterans, the commission said.

The commission last year paid $3,393,000 in unemployment compensation to civilians, compared with $7,771,000 in 1946. During 1947 the commission paid $6,270,000 in federal unemployment allowances" to unemployed veterans, compared with $19,280,000 in 1946.

AFL AIR LINE PILOTS SIGN NEW AGREEMENT

New York City.—The AFL's Air Lines Pilots Association and United Air Lines signed a new contract governing pay and working conditions for the company's 1,000 pilots.

The contract provides that a senior officer flying 80 hours a month, half day, half night, in a DC-6 will receive $909, and if flying a DC-6 in overwater operations will receive $1,266 a month. The rate for the same officer on a DC-6 run in the United States will be $1,186.

Taft-Hartley Law Held Threatening Labor Peace; Council Proposes Strong Anti-Inflation Program

Calls Upon Congress to Repudiate NAM Policy; Urges Minimum 4-Point Anti-Inflation Program to Benefit All Americans

Miami.—The AFL Executive Council called upon Congress to disavow the reactionary influence of the National Association of Manufacturers and to arrest the upward price spiral for the benefit of the American people now suffering from "high prices and the shrinking purchasing power of their wages.

Warning that the "vast majority of the American people cannot endure this cruel economic squeeze indefinitely," the council proposed the following 4-point minimum program for immediate action:

1. A sweeping congressional investigation into the vast and unjustified spread between the prices paid farmers for their products and the retail price consumers are forced to pay for food products.

2. Enactment of an excess profits tax to discourage profiteering.

3. Necessary authority for the President to impose rationing and selective price controls on vital commodities in short supply.

4. Extension of rent control under terms permitting fair returns to landlords.

The AFL leaders warned that unchecked inflation will play into the hands of the enemies of democracy now counting upon economic collapse in this nation to further their own aims.

Turning to the wage question, the council declared that "under existing conditions, wages cannot be stabilized until prices are controlled and stabilized."

The text of the Executive Council's statement on inflation follows:

"The enemies of democracy are confidently expecting the collapse of America's economy and the disintegration of our ability to preserve world peace and freedom. In this hope, they are counting upon inflation as their most powerful ally. They know that the present unprecedented high cost of living is the chief, but not the only, cause of the present unrest and beyond justification. The purchasing power of the dollar has been ravaged by cancerous inflation. American families, especially those whose income is derived from wages, have been forced to eat into their savings. And no relief is yet in sight.

"The vast majority of the American people cannot endure this cruel economic squeeze indefinitely. They know they are being robbed right and left every time they buy what they need to sustain life. The public is becoming bitterly aroused by its victimization. Unless drastic action is forthcoming promptly to halt the inflation spiral and prevent prices from climbing any higher, the American voters will deal harshly with those they consider responsible for inaction next November.

"Under existing conditions, wages cannot be stabilized until prices are controlled and stabilized.

"Today the free enterprise system is on trial. We, who are committed to the free American way of life, dare not let it succumb. Yet we know there is powerful forces in our country who are combining economic atrocities in the name of free enterprise. In our opinion, the policies of the National Association of Manufacturers will destroy the free enterprise system more surely and more quickly than any conceivable attack from the outside.

"The Executive Council does not pretend to have all the answers to the problems of inflation. Too many complicated and interrelated factors are involved to make any pat solution feasible. But we are convinced that the leadership of Congress has thus far approached this problem in the wrong spirit. We call upon Congress now to disavow the reactionary influence of the National Association of Manufacturers and take up its duty of arresting the price spiral from the top down, rather than from the bottom up.

"At the same time, the Executive Council strongly urges this minimum program of immediate action:

"1. A sweeping congressional investigation into the vast and unjustified spread between the price the farmers receive for their product and the price consumers are forced to pay for the same. This spread frequently ranges from 100 to 200 percent.

"2. Enactment of an excess profits tax to discourage indiscriminate profiteering.

"3. Grant of authority to the President to impose rationing and selective price controls on vital necessities which threaten to fall into short supply.

"4. Extension of rent control, under terms which will permit fair returns to owners of housing facilities.

"We believe that if this minimum program is enacted, it will have a discouraging effect upon inflation and may begin to ease prices gradually back to their proper level."

Hatters Union Sets Up Political Unit; Says 3d Party Threatens Liberalism

Atlantic City.—The executive board of the AFL's United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers Union acted to set up a political unit in the organization to fight for repeal of the Taft-Hartley law.

To finance the activities of the political drive, the board authorized a campaign to collect $1 from voluntary contributions from union members to be used to defeat those members of Congress who voted for the anti-labor law.

The 24-member board at its semi-annual meeting here pledged support to the national political action campaign to be launched by the CIO to defeat the administration in the 1948 Presidential race.

In another resolution, the board called upon Henry Wallace, "in the interests of liberalism," to withdraw his candidacy for President "so there will be no division of progressive forces in 1948."

The resolution, which said for the first time in American labor history that the entire trade union movement is mobilizing its forces for political action, declared:

"The decision that will be made in 1948 will be the most important in history. Therefore, it is essential that all genuine liberals in this country gather with labor to overcome the reaction that threatens from the extreme right and the advancing tide of totalitarian aggression that threatens from the extreme left."

The union leaders said that in this situation they strongly opposed attempts now being made to weaken the ranks of labor and liberal forces by running a third ticket in the 1948 Presidential race.

The executive board issued a call for the next biennial convention of the union to be held in New York starting May 10.

POPULATION SHIFTS NOT GREAT IN POSTWAR YEARS

New York City.—The National Industrial Conference Board declared there has been little redistribution of population in the postwar period contrary to the expectations of many observers.

A major cause of the seeming permanence of the war-time shift in population, according to the board, has been the continuance of a high level of economic activity.

Since more than 50 percent of migration in the postwar period has been connected in one way with employment, areas which remain highly industrialized attract the major portion of migration.

RESERVE BOARD SAYS CURB NEEDED TO STOP PRICE HIKE

Washington, D. C.—The Federal Reserve Board predicted that further increases in higher prices are inevitable unless strong steps are taken to counteract the trend.

The board's monthly bulletin said that a "basic essential" of heading off such economic trouble is to restrain further increases in the total of bank loans. Any appreciable increase in loans, the bulletin said, "can lead only to the further bidding up of prices."

The article indicated that rationing and price controls would be among a "variety of measures" required in "any adequate program" for dealing with inflation.

MEANY REPORTS GAIN IN AFL MEMBERSHIP

Miami.—George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Labor, reported an 18,000 gain in AFL membership during the past 6 months.

Mr. Meany informed the AFL Executive Council, in session here, that the total membership of the organization reached a grand total of 7,900,000 toward the end of 1947 after allowing for the withdrawal from the AFL of the United Mine Workers of America.

Loss of the UMW reduced the total membership to about 7,- 200,000, it was reported.

Council Supports New Hemispheric Free Labor Group

Miami.—The AFL Executive Council pledged its full support to the newly-formed Inter-American Confederation of Labor.

The AFL leaders issued a statement declaring that "in addition to participate fully in the affairs of the new hemispheric labor organization which, they said, "will promote wider understanding and goodwill among all in the western hemisphere" and can "be an effective instrument for world peace."

The statement was issued following submission to the Executive Council of a report by the three AFL representatives who participated in the organization conference at Lima, Peru, which told of the enthusiastic and active response of the free trade unions in 17 nations which sent delegations to attend the international meeting.

The report declared that despite attempts to sabotage the meeting by communists and the Argentine Confederation of Labor, the delegation, representing about 14 million trade union members, worked to make the conference "from the point of view of a number of countries, organizations and membership represented, a most successful one, considering the most optimistic expectations."

Commenting upon the report, the council statement said:

"The Executive Council is deeply gratified by the progress made toward unifying the free trade union forces of the western hemisphere through the formation of the Inter-American Confederation of Labor at the recent Lima Conference.

"We commend the American Federation of Labor's delegation to the conference, who submitted their report to us today, made it clear that Communist and fascist forces in South America are still carrying on a bitter campaign of vilification against this country and our foreign policy.

"This is to be expected. But the significant news is that the great majority of the people and the workers of Latin America are not being hoodwinked by such propaganda. Already the influence of the Communists and fascists in the countries of South is waning and the anti-American campaign initiated by the Argentine government has received little support.

"We are confident the operations of the new Inter-American Confederation of Labor will be conducive to wider understanding and greater good will in the western hemisphere, because of the cooperation and the fraternity of the free trade unions in the various member nations.

"The American Federation of Labor intends to participate fully in the affairs of the new Inter-American Federation of Labor. The Council feels that this organization can make an effective contribution toward the maintenance of world peace.

"We, in addition, believe that the formation of this hemispheric organization of workers represents a major development in our countries' policy of extending the benefits and principles of free democratic government to all the peoples of the western hemisphere."

Council Statement Pledges Renewed Drive to Repeal Law, Defeat Reactionary Sponsors; Warns On Claims for Law's Success

Miami.—The AFL Executive Council reemphasized its determination to wage an unrelenting war upon the Taft-Hartley law to bring about its repeal and the defeat of all those in Congress who voted for the measure.

In a prepared statement, the council warned against the actions of the law's proponents in attempting to claim credit for pointing to the present low level of strikes and work stoppages to back up their claims.

Pointing out that the comparative lull in labor-management disputes is due to the fact that many contracts were negotiated just prior to the effective date of the law, the council warned that "America is now experiencing a lull before the storm."

"When present collective bargaining contracts expire," the council said, "the most difficult period in the history of labor relations in this country threatens to ensue."

Urging the labor movement to redouble its efforts to fight against the forces of reaction and to guard against any ward off further efforts to curb our American workers, the council declared:

"We know that if the forces of reaction are returned to power next November, they will proceed at once to renew their war against labor by enacting a bar against nation-wide collective bargaining, outlawing all health and welfare funds for workers and by making unions subject to anti-trust prosecutions.

"We know that labor cannot live and endure the Taft-Hartley Act and that the basic policy of its sponsors is to stifle progress in America."

The full text of the council statement follows:

"The sponsors of the Taft-Hartley Act are preparing to acclaim it as a success next month, the first anniversary of its enactment. Seeking to escape the political consequences of their actions, they are hoping to make the American people believe that the Taft-Hartley Act has reduced strikes and improved labor-management relations.

"The workers of this country will not be misled by such statistical illusions. They know that the comparative lull in strikes during the past few months is due to the fact that most of the major contracts which will arise in many industries postponed the evil effects of the Taft-Hartley Act for a year or more.

"In fact, America is now experiencing a lull before the storm. When present collective bargaining contracts expire, the most difficult period in the history of labor relations in this country threatens to ensue.

"The signs are unmistakable. Perhaps the most dramatic instance to date has been the experience of the International Typographical Union in attempting to negotiate new contracts with publishers during recent weeks. Testimony before the National Labor Relations Board by both union and employer representatives is in complete agreement on the fact that the present existence of amicable and cooperative labor-management relations in this country is due entirely to the harsh provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act. If there were no such law, both sides could have agreed on new contracts long ago, as they have for many, many years.

"Instead, we find a government agency—the National Labor Relations Board—prescribing this stable, progressive and public spirited trade union because the law makes it well-nigh impossible for the union to obtain the traditional type of security which it has won for the protection of its members.

"Government prosecutions of the legitimate activities of unions now threatens to break out into a wrash all over the nation. Already injunction suits have been filed against several organizations and employers, in some instances, have taken advantage of the new law's provisions to file damage suits against unions.

"How anyone can expect unions to function and industrial production to proceed smoothly when labor-management relations are tied up with legal red tape is beyond reason and common sense.

"The Executive Council feels constrained to point out these unpleasant facts because the enemies of labor are determined to attempt ti remove the Taft-Hartley Act as an issue in the 1948 election.

"Organized labor will never let the professional politicians get away with that.

"We know that if the forces of reaction are returned to power next November, they will proceed at once to renew their war against labor by enacting a ban against nation-wide collective bargaining, by outlawing all health and welfare funds for workers and by making unions subject to anti-trust prosecutions.

"We know that labor cannot live and endure under the Taft-Hartley Act and that the basic policy of its sponsors is to stifle progress in America.

"Therefore, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor solemnly reemphasizes its determination to carry on the fight against the Taft-Hartley Act until it is repealed and to campaign against the sponsors and supporters until they are defeated. By the unrelenting war upon these enemies and their friends, we are confident that these goals can be achieved in the 1948 elections and that our government will be restored once more into hands dedicated to forward progress and not backward to reaction and oppression."

Dice Loaded Against Working People By Taft-Harley Law, Declares Morse

Washington, D. C.—Senator Wayne L. Morse of Oregon, in an article appearing in "Progressive," charged that the bill "was designed not only to curb certain abuses but to weaken labor's position at the bargaining table."

"It tips the collective bargaining scales against millions of Americans who have been exercising their rights over the years to improve their living standards," Morse declared.

"It invites a return to government by injunction," he said.

"Every effort to achieve collective bargaining under this act, that hostile employers can keep a union financially bankrupt. Add the inevitable delays and technicalities involved and you have a perfect formula for industrial strife.

He riddled the law's provisions which permit unions to invoke all sorts of reports and affidavits before they can use the machinery of the National Labor Relations Board.

"Labor is the only segment whose house is being burglarized that is not free to have police protection because his taxes are in arrears," Morse said.

Morse summed up his warning that, in the end, the act may open the door to Fascism.

"Once a government starts to exercise the power to direct the relations which shall exist between supposedly free workers and free employers," he asserted, "then it is not many steps away from a regimented economy."

The Right to VOTE Is Your Priceless Heritage

Don't Fail to Use It